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BLOSSOMS.

A BOOK OF POEMS.

BY

MISS NELLIE E. ADAMS.



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PREFACE.

At the request of friends this little volume is introduced to the public. Poems which have before appeared in print have been collected, but the greater part were written expressly for this volume. It is hoped you will be charitable in your criticisms, for youth and inexperience seems to call for forbearance. BLOSSOMS has, I trust, been rightly named; and, in the future, when riper years, richer experiences, and a broader culture shall have been obtained, may you behold the full blooms.

THE AUTHOR.

Grandmother's Spinning-Wheel.

I was searching in the garret, one misty, rainy day,
 Passing 'mid the chests and boxes the lonely hours a-
 way,
 Finding rare and ancient treasures of the days of yore,
 Which would nevermore be needed,—nevermore.
 I sat there sadly thinking of the by-gone, 'youthful
 years,
 That were as full of pleasure as the present was of
 tears,
 When, in a distant corner, Grandma's spinning wheel
 I spied,
 Many years it had stood there, ever since the day she
 died.
 Oh the many recollections that came thronging to me
 then,
 As I thought of vanished pictures, of times that once
 had been,
 I wandered back to childhood's artless, happy days,
 Ere I knew pain or sorrow or the world's deceitful
 ways.
 Once more I heard the stories told by grandma, as she
 spun,
 And across the broad, white floor saw the golden sun-
 beams run.
 But a time came when forever ceased the wheel's loud
 hum,
 And the voice that told the stories, was in death forever
 dumb.
 When the wrinkled, trembling hands that ne'er lay in
 idle rest,
 Were folded white as marble, on a cold and pulseless
 breast;
 We missed the dear old grandma when her form was
 laid away,
 And our sorrow, it was almost too deep for us to pray
 And when, back to the homestead, I came from o'er the
 sea,
 I found no one waiting here, no one to welcome me;
 For all familiar faces were hidden 'neath the sod.
 While their spirits had ascended to their home with
 God.
 I am growing older, grayer, as the days glide slowly
 by,
 And the time comes soon or late when I too must die.
 And, like me, this spinning-wheel is growing older, day
 by day,
 It I'll keep, a sacred treasure, till we both to dust
 decay.

The Elm Tree's Story.

I watch from my snug corner the coming and going of
 men,
 Some in their youthful vigor, others wrecks of what
 has been;
 Merry children with their school-books, daily passing
 to and fro,
 Happy, care-free, knowing nothing of the future's weal
 or woe.
 I have watched the little ones grow old and worn and
 gray.
 And seen the long procession bear their forms to rest
 away.
 Some, when grown to noble manhood, wearied of their
 childhood's home,
 Followed by sincere regretting, to other parts did
 roam.
 Memory now her flight is winging backward some
 seven years and more,
 Ever green I hold the remembrance of those happy
 days of yore;
 Then the children played about me at the closing of
 the day,
 Or sat and told their stories when wearied with their
 play.
 Oh I loved, I loved the children, so artless and full of
 glory,
 And two there were among them, whom, I dared to think
 loved me.
 One was brown-eyed and dimpled, and her heart was
 warm and true.
 The other was less comely, fair-haired with eyes of
 blue.
 Oh merry little maidens, ye loved each other long,
 When one cast aside the mortal, did the old love seem
 less strong?
 Seven years ago I watched you standing yonder by the
 gate,
 Heeding not the gathering darkness, knowing not the
 hour was late.
 Did something whisper to you of the life ere you
 would meet?
 Blue-eyes, must oft grow weary, but brownie's little
 feet
 Soon crossed the deep, dark river, bounding the other
 shore
 And was safe from sin and sorrow, pain and death
 forevermore.

Blue-eyes standing 'neath me saw them bear her mate
 away,
 And all her soul within her grew dark as the sunless
 day;
 'Then back to the world she turned her childhood forev-
 er o'er,
 Life never again to be the same as it had been before.
 And ever, thro' all of the onward way, a dear, laughing
 face that is gone,
 And a chubby, dimpled hand, now still, are beckoning
 blue-eyes on;
 Beckoning her on to higher paths, a crown of glory
 to win,
 Beckoning her to where at last, there will be no parting,
 no death, no sin.
 And now I have finished my story, I must say to you
 good-bye,
 And when, felled by some ruthless hand, on the green
 earth dead I lie,
 Perhaps some one will mourn for the old friend gone at
 last,
 Perhaps some one will drop a tear in memory of the
 past.

Now and Then.

Now the working and the waiting
 For a time which does not come;
 Then will come the joyful reaping,
 Gathering of the harvest home.

Now the longing and the weeping
 For those we see here no more;
 Then the rapture of the greeting
 On heaven's sinless, happy shore.

Now the grief sin bringeth to us,
 And the struggling for a life;
 Then each shadow swiftly fadeth,
 For in heaven there is no strife.

Two Wrecks.

The sea moaned, swelling heavily
 Under a gloomy sky,
 While the seething, white capped breakers,
 Tossed their briny foam on high.

And the ship, that sailed at daybreak
 Out from the harbor bar,
 Beneath a sunny heaven,
 Floating proudly stripe and star,

Was being widely driven,
 Like a bird, before the gale.
 Her anchor lost in the sea-flood,
 And torn each snowy sail.

Before the arching rainbow,
 Told that the storm was o'er,
 She sank beneath the billows
 To rise, to rise no more.

Out in the gathering darkness,
 Out in the wind and the sleet,
 With face upturned to a pitiless sky,
 Lay a body in the street.

The wreck of a once proud manhood,
 Of a life that promised fair,
 Of loves, and hopes, and ambitions,
 The end of all lay there.

Somebody kissed that bloated face,
 When it was young and fair;
 Someone curled round a baby head
 Those ringlets of sunny hair.

Somebody thought of the comfort and pride
 He would be in the after years;
 Somebody sank into the grave
 In bitter woe and tears.

And now it is left with you to decide,
 For each and all of you can,
 Which do you think was the sadder wreck,
 That of the ship or the man?

Lines on the Seventy-first Birthday of Col. A. D. Hatch.

Seventy-one years on this broad earth,
 Tasting life's bitter and its sweet;
 Finding the path that upward leads,
 Oftentimes thorny to the feet.
 Rising by thine own inward strength,
 True to thy country thro' good and ill,
 When called by her in peace and war,
 Posts of honor and trust to fill.
 Reaping reward for the years of youth,
 Spent in making a place and name;
 Finding that toil from dawn to dark,
 Is the only way to fame.
 Passing not by thy brother man,
 As if thou wert of a better race,
 But reaching down a kindly hand,
 And helping him to a higher place.
 And as a tribute to thy worth,
 Accept this little song,
 From one who knows there's need in life
 Of a purpose true and strong.
 Hoping the years now seventy-one,
 May lengthen to many more,
 And the bread cast on earthly waters,
 Return on the other shore.

 Happy New Year.

"Happy New Year" we've been wishing
 To all friends we chanced to meet;
 Whether by the cosy fireside,
 Or upon the crowded street.
 Sometimes we the words have uttered
 With an undertone of fear;
 Fearing some will be called higher,
 Ere the closing of the year.
 Knowing not the joys and sorrows
 Which may each of us befall;
 Yet should we press on with courage,
 For the Father knows them all.
 Lovingly let's do our duty,
 Then we need to have no fear,
 But our wishes may be fulfilled
 In the newly-opened year.

The Pastor's Silver Wedding.

Written for the Silver Wedding of Rev. and Mrs. J. N.
Chase, September 12, 1884.

Here in these pleasant rooms to-night,
Gazing on each familiar face,
Many bearing the impress of years,
Many fair with a youthful grace,

Let us glance at the lights and shadows
Of the swiftly vanished years;
Years into which God's blessings
Have brought more smiles than tears.

Yes it is twenty-five years ago,
Since the marriage vow was said,
And two hearts looked to the future,
With a faith unmingled with dread.

There came a lovely MAY-flower,
Budding in old Deepriver;
And she bling around by its sweet life,
A fragrance to last forever.

But one dear little baby-bud,
The only blighted one.
God took home to bloom above,
Its brief earth-life was done.

And then came a double blessing
Of both a WILL and a WAY;
And in my each Will for right be strong,
Pleasant and plain each Way.

Looking into the future with longing eyes,
Our studious Emma we see;
Waiting for what the years will bring,
Wondering if she too will a schoolmarm be.

Last, but not least, comes little John,
Patiently plodding his upward way,
Knowing though long, it leads at last
Up to eternal day.

Now the home ties are all complete,
And the golden link of love,
Binds the hearts of those below,
To the little one above.

Twelve years of sowing and reaping,
Have they spent with us, our pastor and wife,
Sympathizing with us in joys and in sorrows,
May God's richest blessings attend them through life.

Forever may love, and joy, and peace,
 Light round their paths be shedding;
 And may we gather at the golden,
 As at the silver wedding.

And now, dear friends, we offer
 Unto you, these tokens of silver;
 With a prayer that peace and plenty
 May be yours now and ever.

Heralds of Spring.

Winter with its snowy robes, spotless and fair to see,
 Has fled, and the welcome springtime is not forgotten
 by thee,
 Oh tiny sparrow and robin, bluebird and thrush and
 wren,
 And, musical heralds of springtime, we joyfully greet
 you again.
 Gone is the mourning time of nature, when thy welcome
 notes were still;
 Now Spring for thee dons her newest robes, and laughs
 in each rippling rill.
 Little I tumble, brown-backed sparrow, you are with us
 in storm and sun.
 And your mission in cheering life's gloomy hours is
 surely a glorious one.
 There are birds of brighter plumage, there are those of
 sweeter song.
 Than these which trill their carols, our hills and vales a-
 mong.
 But the merciful Father who watcheth from his high
 throne above,
 Throws round the smallest and humblest his protecting
 arms of love.
 'Neath milder suns the mocking-bird's song deceiveth
 the foolish and wise,
 And the rainbow hues are reflected in the birds of para-
 dise;
 But to us our feathered warbler's one only song of
 praise,
 Is very grateful and cheering after the silent days.
 And we learn from the birds a lesson it is well for us to
 know,
 A lesson of trusting and praising while in this life be-
 low;
 As not even the tiniest birdie doth unminded fall,
 For the Father who createth, loveth and careth for all.

Come.

"Come to me all ye that labor,
All who in sin's paths do roam;
Why, oh why, will you wait longer?
Just as you are, just now, come home.

On the earth for you I suffered,
With my blood your pardon bought;
'Twas for love, that I might save you,
Shall it have been done for nought?

You have tried to serve two masters,
This, you find, you cannot do;
Choose this night whom you will live for,
Come, oh come, I wait for you."

Thus with me the Savior pleaded,
How could I resist the call?
I was weary with my doubting,
And I yielded to him all.

Cast myself, in all my weakness,
At the foot of his dear cross;
Counting all these years of striving,
With their gain, as bitter loss.

Finding peace, and love, and sunshine,
Where but conflicts raged so long;
All my darkness changed to brightness,
All my sighing into song.

When My Ship Comes In.

I will see that wrongs are righted,
Hopes fulfilled, which now are blighted,
Worth be known, which none have sighted,
When my ship comes in.

I will lighten hearts now weary,
I will brighten lives now deary,
Hearts and lives with sorrow weary,
When my ship comes in.

Help to raise a fallen brother,
Scorned, neglected, by another,
Show how one may aid the other
When my ship comes in.

Where has the Sunshine Gone.

The sky was cloudy, and snow had been falling,
 Piling in fleecy drifts all the morn,
 And the little one at the window whispered,
 " 'Ellie, where has the sunshine gone?
 S'pose it has gone so far away from us
 That it will never come back any more?"
 Thus the girlie plied me with questions,
 All she could find in childish lore.

Then I explained that the sun was shining,
 Clouds were hiding it from our sight.
 How it would burst forth in glorious beauty
 Gilding the earth with the golden light.
 She seemed not quite to comprehend it.
 And looked at me in a puzzled way,
 "Doesn't fink I undersands it,
 But I believes it, what 'ou say."

We, who are older, are slow in believing,
 When we are baffled, and weary with strife;
 That behind the clouds God's sunshine's streaming,
 Ready to scatter the shadows of life.
 And so in all the darkened places.
 With doubting, our hearts are rife,
 And the cry swells up from tye soul's deep fountains,
 "Where has gone the sunshine of life?"

 After Many Days.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters,"
 Thus we in the scriptures read;
 There's deep meaning in this portion
 Of the olden preacher's creed.
 "For it shall return unto you,"
 Though its "After many days;"
 This, methinks, he wrote for comfort,
 As we tread life's devious ways,
 For it often may seem to us,
 As we sow in fearfulness,
 That no after-harvest cometh,
 No reward our toil will bless.
 But take courage, all ye tollers.
 "Cast thy bread," on all life's ways:
 The reward is surely coming,
 Though its "After many days."

The Old Man's Farewell.

"Good evening sir, good evening,
 As you are going away,
 I thought I'd come and see you.
 As I have something to say.
 You've been a good friend to me.
 And to many a one beside,
 For your kind heart we bless you,
 And think of you with pride.
 Many, yes many, owe you
 A debt they can never repay,
 But the mighty God will bless you,
 And we bless you today.
 I speak for those you have rescued
 From death and from despair,
 For the smiles you've brought to faces
 Worn with toil and care.
 And, sir, your hearty "Good morning."
 Has gone with us like a song,
 And we have been happier for it,
 Happier all the day long.
 Maybe you have thought sometimes,
 That your kindness no gratitude knew.
 But, sir, our deepest feelings,
 Are known to very few.
 Never think that I pray you,
 Over and over again;
 Your kindly deeds are living,
 They were not spent in vain.
 Remember there are many hearts,
 Hearts that are warm and true,
 Holding many a kindly thought,
 And grateful love for you.
 But I must be going now sir.
 The hour is growing late,
 And now, I would in parting,
 Simply and briefly state,
 Accept an old man's blessing,
 'Tis all I have to give,
 And my prayers shall ever follow you
 Just as long as we live.
 Remember one heart is beating
 In gratefulness to you;
 A heart that never changes,
 But to friends is ever true.
 And may the Father prosper you,
 And shield you in the strife,
 Giving to you and your loved ones,
 A long and happy life.

Farewell and Greeting.

Good-bye old year, swiftly passing,
O'er thy dying couch we bend,
Thrice in thy dull ear, we utter
Our farewells, as to a friend,

'Thou hast brought us many blessings,
Much to cheer us in the strife;
And hast weaved into the picture
Shadows with the lights of life.

'Thou hast taken from us hours,
Which can never be redeemed;
We have lost the threads of chances,
Hopes of which we long had dreamed.

And the thought that we might better
Have performed our part gives pain;
Knowing what we've lost will never
Come to gladden us again.

And gazing from our windows,
On the softly falling snow,
We think of fair, sweet faces,
'Neath the white-robed earth laid low,

Which thou, old year, didn't take from us,
'Midst thy sunshine, leaf, and bloom:
Oh the light that with them vanished,
Quenched within the darkened tomb.

So we bid thee farewell, old year,
With thy freight of hope and fear,
Looking for a brighter record
In the swiftly nearing year.

Happy new year! glad we greet thee,
Young thou art, and free from care;
All unspotted is thy record,
Would it might e'er be as fair.

And with God's help we'll endeavor
To be nobler than before.
Strive that there be less regretting
When thy work, at last, is o'er.

Down by the Sea.

Down by the briny ocean, Down on the shining strand,
 Where gaiety and confusion greet one on every hand,
 On a gray rock I sit musing, at the setting of the sun,
 I sit alone, unheeding the hours that pass, one by one.
 Behind me are the marshes, before the glittering sands,
 And beyond is the billowy ocean, bounded by sunny lands.
 Over yonder islands lie like gems on Atlantic's breast,
 And one of them the sailor loves more than all the rest.
 The night queen rises lowly, shedding her silvery light,
 Over the sparkling waters, and shore so clear and white.
 The human world about me sinks quietly to repose,
 And I hear but the ocean sobbing into my ear its woes.
 It tells of storm and shipwreck, that 'mong the gems in
 its breast,
 Lie forms of pale, cold sleepers, in long and peaceful rest,
 And many a curly, golden head, and some white as snow,
 Lie unheeding the surges, in their watery grave so low.
 And I list again to the story how not many rods away
 A friend of mine was bathing one beautiful summer day;
 The sun shone brightly o'er her, happy was her heart,
 Ah! she thought not in the blue waves, Death lurked with
 icy dart.
 Away from her companion breakers her light form bare
 Away from life and loved ones, away from human care;
 With trembling hands they brought her out of the briny
 foam,
 And bore her, strangely silent, back to the dear old home.
 What a warning to be ever ready when Death shall call
 us to go;
 For the time or way of his calling we none of us may
 know.
 O mother, in that fair land where she is waiting for thee
 Remember the good book saith "There shall be no more
 sea"

 Cheer Up.

Cheer up! it's not always darkness,
 Night ever gives way to dawn;
 And the darker the night you know,
 The brighter to us seems the morn.
 Then face life's troubles bravely,
 Look them squarely in the eye,
 And they will lessen and lessen,
 Till they bid a hasty good-bye.

Out of the Ranks.

Life's battle goes on about me
 From dawn to evening's close.
 Till, nature becoming weary,
 The toilers seek repose;
 While I youthful and hopeful,
 Eyes turned to the future ahead,
 Have been forced to drop from the ranks,
 And to rest for a while instead.

Long have I vainly struggled,
 Striving to hide my pain;
 Hoping in doing for others,
 To find sweet rest again;
 To lose my bitter anguish
 In seeing what others bare,
 In making the faces about me
 Smile, which are full of care.

And now though all about me,
 From dawn to evening's close.
 Others are working and winning,
 I give myself to repose;
 To repose of the body only,
 For my thoughts will not be still;
 Thought can be controlled never,
 It knows no law nor will.

What wonder if sometimes I murmur,
 As I view from afar the fray,
 And know that while I am idle,
 Others are winning the day;
 But though I am not a worker
 Perhaps from my calm retreat,
 I can send forth words of comfort,
 To cheer some weary feet.

On Duty Again.

I can pen for you a song tonight,
 Instead of the wail before,
 For I'm back in the midst of the battle,
 Back on duty once more.
 The shadow so dark has lifted,
 The waiting time is past,
 And the welcome order "Forward"
 Has come unto me at last.

Gladly obey I the summons,
 Eager am I for the fray,
 Willingly bear I the burdens
 That come to me day by day.
 Forward I'll press in the battle,
 As far as ever I can;
 And who dares set a limit
 To the powers God-given to man.

Of course I have lost in the waiting
 What I can never redeem,
 And oft, with a throb of anguish,
 I recall the past like a dream.
 But I have learned many a lesson
 I needed to know, by its pain;
 And I would n't give the present
 For all of the past again.

And if I can help a brother
 To aim at a mark that is high,
 If I can warn the tempted
 When danger and death are nigh,
 If I can bring joy and comfort,
 Where grief and adversity reign,
 I shall dare to think that maybe,
 I am not living in vain.

Whom I Call Friend.

I count that one a friend who stands by me
 Through good and ill, in woe as well as joy;
 Who shows his feelings for me pure and true,
 Rich gold without a flaw, without alloy.
 Who is not one day distant, strange and cold,
 Another shedding round me sunny smile,
 But one whose love-fire never grows less bright,
 And ever beams upon me all the while.
 Who warns me of my faults in gentle tone,
 And kindly aids me to amend,
 If from the paths of truth and right,
 My wandering footsteps tend.
 Who, when prosperity has taken flight,
 Does not leave me lonely in my need,
 Who stands by me thro' all life's changing scenes,
 That one I hold a faithful friend indeed.

"O Give Me Sleep."

Softly the shadows were gathering,
 In the dim and silent room,
 And the death-angel, low hovering,
 Shrouded us darkly in gloom.
 And we waited, as the swift hours passed,
 And thought, with a shudder of dread,
 Of the loneliness that was coming
 In the future not far ahead.

We saw the shadows stealing
 Over the sweet girl-face;
 Felt the white hands chilling
 As they lay in death's embrace.
 I had carried flowers to her that eve,
 As so oft I had done before;
 And thought, with a pang of anguish,
 I shall pluck them for her—no more.

How her face lighted as she saw them.
 And held them in her hand!
 I trust, now, she gathers lovelier ones,
 In God's own flower-land.
 We watched her going, going,
 The dear face grow more white;
 Saw the rare, sweet smile as it faded,
 Faded forever that night.

And we heard, as we saw the death-slumber
 Over the blue eyes creep,
 Heard the sweet voice low pleading,
 "O Father, give me sleep!
 I am growing, oh, so weary,
 And rest comes not to me."
 "Darling," the comforter uttered,
 "A long rest is coming to thee."

"Good-bye," the words came faintly,
 The soul was nearly gone,
 "O give me sleep, dear Father!"
 She was resting, we were alone.
 The days of anguish were over,
 For this how could we weep,
 She was resting, resting forever;
 The Father had given her sleep.

And sometimes I can but wonder,
 If at some distant day,
 When in life's battle we've fallen,
 And death calls us, shall we say.
 As this world is fading from us,
 And eternity doth on us creep,
 Shall we plead, as did our loved one.
 "O Father, give me sleep."

Willie.

Oh Willie, sweet baby Willie,
 So lovely and so fair,
 With sunlight in your blue eyes,
 And on your golden hair,
 You think not of the future,
 That unto you may come.
 Your little world is bounded,
 By the cheery walls of home.

Papa to you is perfection.
 Mamma an angel of love;
 Both, baby dear, are your keepers,
 Ordained by the Father above.
 Ah Willie! I would that always
 You might be pure as now,
 That never a guilt or sorrow
 Might rest upon your brow.

May your heart, now gentle and loving,
 Ever be so through life,
 And not grow hard and narrow,
 By the chafing of the strife.
 Keep a noble aim before you,
 Keep your life pure and true,
 And then, when the sure end cometh,
 You will have nothing to rue.

In Memoriam.

B. M. C.

Tears, bitter tears are falling, and our hearts are sad to day,

As we gather for the last time around the lifeless clay;
For the spirit has departed from its prison-house of earth
And, freed from mortal fetters, entered an immortal birth.

Nevermore among us shall be seen her welcome form;
With the brown eyes closed forever, she will rest 'mid
sun or storm.

We shall list to hear in song, the birdlike voice again,
That is silent now forever, we may long for it in vain.
And we wonder in our grieving, why it should seem
ever so,

That the brightest and most gifted, are always first to go
But in the nearing future we may know the reason why
The flowers that are the rarest, the soonest droop and die.
But remember, stricken-hearted, Jesus wept at Lazarus' tomb,

And this thought should be a comfort, even in our gloom
As we lay her away 'mid the flowers, the fairest one of all
And leave her to sleep on, rest on, until the angel's call

Echoes

Ever round the sparkling waters,
Jutting cliffs arise;

In the dark, still depths are mirrored
Nature's changeful skies.

Calm as infant, sweetly sleeping
On the mother's knee,

When the golden rays of sunlight
Bid the shadows flee

But, when o'er the hills of ages
Thunders mutter loud,

Cliff to cliff rebounds the echo
From the flashing cloud.

Ever round the soul immortal
Human cliffs arise;

Cliffs of love, and high endeavor,
Kindly aims and wise.

And the souls deep wells are mirrored
In the mortal face;

For we may the life that's inner,
In the outer trace.

Cliffs of evil passion rising
Mar the soul within;

All the hidden goodness shading
 'Neath a cloud of sin.
 And from soul to soul rebounding,
 Deeds and words live aye;
 Are their echoes as we'll wish them
 In the bye and bye.

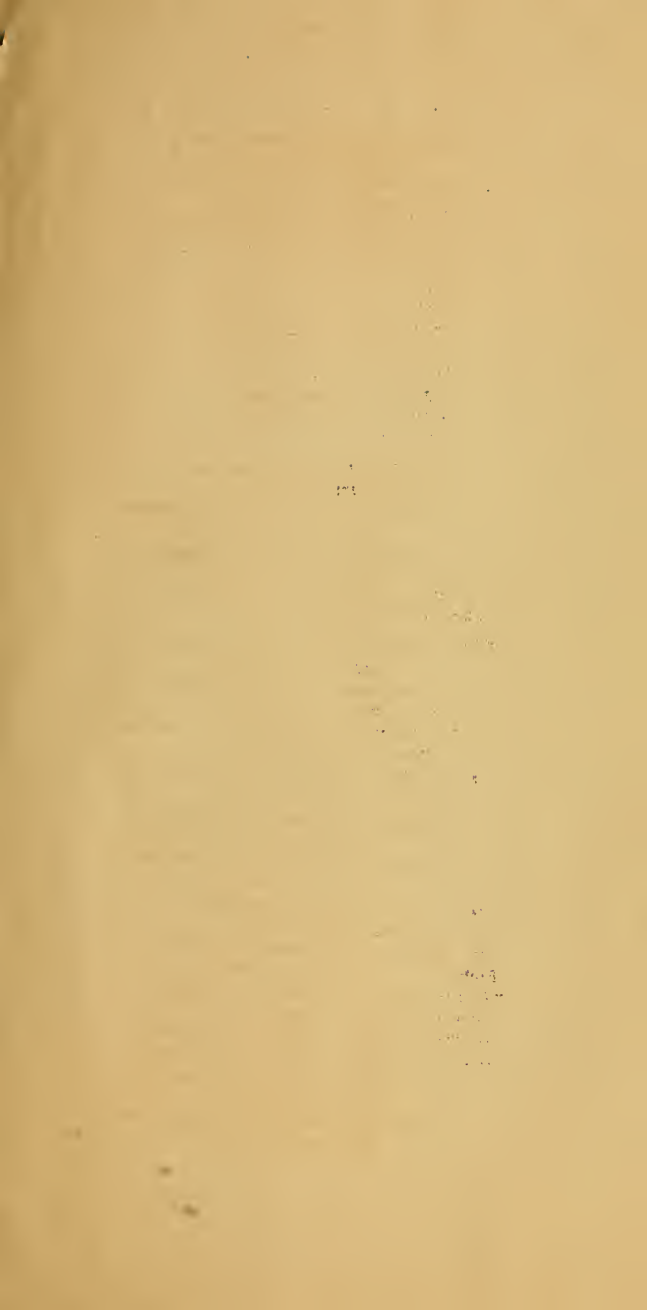
Every Day.

Every day the genial sunlight
 Tints the azure skies;
 Tho' oftentimes the brightness darkens
 'Neath the clouds that rise.
 And the dawning's ruddy promise,
 Ends in deepest gloom;
 As the blight untimely falleth
 On the fairest bloom.

Every day life's grateful sunshine
 Waits to bless the soul,
 Tho' beneath the falling shadows,
 Hidden is life's goal.
 And our eyes grow dim with watching
 For the light again;
 And our ears grow dull with listening
 For an old refrain.

Every day some face that's dearer
 Unto us than life
 Whose deeds, kindly, daily rendered
 Aid us in the strife;
 Groweth daily so accustomed
 We forget the while,
 The day cometh, when, without it,
 We'll forget to smile.

Every day, then, let us bravely
 Do and dare and be
 All, that will bring one a blessing
 From the and life of you me.
 Let no soul droop for the sunshine
 You and I can give,
 Then we'll find out on life's highway,
 The true way to live.





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